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# JUSTICE AS A FORM OF EXPRESSION OF HUMAN SOCIALITY

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## Abstract:

This article examines the concept of justice as a fundamental expression of human sociality and social bonds. It reviews literature on the origins and functions of justice systems in enabling cooperation, punishing transgressions, and upholding shared moral values that allow communities to thrive. The interactional nature of justice reveals key aspects of human psychology and behavior regulation in groups. Distributive, procedural, restorative and other forms of justice are explored as multidimensional constructs dependent on context. Findings suggest that the pursuit of justice reflects an intrinsic human drive towards fairness and retribution rooted partly in evolutionary social development. The administration of justice sustains social harmony by affirming people's dignity, rights and shared humanity despite conflicts of interest. Reforms are necessary where justice systems fail to promote social cohesion and wellbeing. Overall, justice seems vital for societal functioning due to its role in correcting wrongs, nurturing moral sensitivity and fulfilling innate human needs for social bonds built on fairness.

## Keywords:

Justice, sociality, cooperation, fairness, morality, social bonds

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## Introduction

Justice is a ubiquitous concern across human societies. The administration of justice through formal and informal institutions regulates social relations and fulfills psychological needs in ways that enable group solidarity, harmony and goal attainment [1]. But why does justice hold such import that people are willing to expend enormous communal efforts and resources in its pursuit? This article analyzes justice as a form of expression of human sociality and innate moral disposition rooted partly in evolutionary social development.

The first section reviews conceptualizations of justice and evidence on its prosocial functions in rewarding cooperators and punishing defectors, which fosters trust and stable social bonds [2]. The next section examines psychological models on justice reasoning, evaluation and motivation that reveal its interactional, comparative and socially embedded nature. Implications for human sociality are discussed. Subsequently, different forms of justice - distributive, procedural, restorative etc - are explored as multidimensional constructs dependent on sociocultural contexts [3]. The penultimate section identifies reforms needed where formalized justice fails to satisfy human needs for fairness and retribution in ways that detract from societal wellbeing. Finally, conclusions are drawn on justice as vital for fostering social cohesion,

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upholding dignity and rights and fulfilling innate human drives for fairness-based reciprocity emerging from evolutionary roots.

## **METHODS AND LITERATURE REVIEW**

This article synthesized research from various disciplines to conceptualize justice as an expression of human social disposition and functioning. The literature review integrated evidence from social psychology, behavioral economics, evolutionary biology, social neuroscience, legal philosophy, sociology and anthropology using a transdisciplinary approach [1]. Database searches focused on peer-reviewed academic publications in English spanning the past three decades. Initial search terms included “justice”, “fairness”, “morality”, “social cognition”, “cooperation”, “procedural justice”, “restorative justice” and “interactional justice”. Articles were selected that offered relevant theoretical models, robust empirical evidence or review papers covering the conceptualization, functions, motivations, reasoning processes, applications and reforms of justice across societies. Over 200 sources were collected providing converging insights.

The analysis followed a hermeneutic review methodology assessing patterns across disciplinary boundaries [2]. Key characteristics of justice were identified, including its universality as a cultural concern linked to prosociality [3], the social interdependence of justice perceptions and moral judgments [4], its interactional and multidimensional nature [5], and variability in forms and implementations based on sociocultural context [6]. Evidence was integrated according to an evolutionary framework [7] positing innate dispositions supporting cooperation through fairness and reciprocity signals, emerging in dynamical interaction with societal needs for order, harmony or restoration [8]. Neuroscience research was assessed determining related motivations and brain mechanisms [9]. Findings converged upon justice as fulfilling core regulation requirements in cooperative groups.

## **RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

The idea of justice is upheld across cultures as vital for societal wellbeing [1][4]. Its cultural universality points to prosocial functions for cooperative species like humans - it enables members to work together effectively towards shared interests by preventing and punishing selfish behaviors [3][5]. Experimental studies confirm that fairness-based distributions of resources elicit greater cooperation in social dilemmas compared to unequal allocations which signal distrust and prompt retaliation [6]. The maintenance of justice and rule of law to deal with transgressions has been linked to increased societal stability, economic prosperity, human development and citizen wellbeing longitudinally and across nations [7]. Such evidence substantiates justice’s role in facilitating collective living.

But there remain competing theories on the exact mechanisms and evolutionary bases of human justice reasoning and motivation [8]. Social exchange models view justice principles as emerging from rational calculations of reciprocity and returns on cooperation [9]. Group value models instead posit that people internalize commitment to justice norms that protect shared interests and allow collectives to thrive [10]. Integrated theories argue these work concurrently

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- our sense of justice developed evolutionarily as tools for navigating social exchange, reinforced through internalized group values about moral rights and duties. Regardless of model specifics, notions of fairness and justice do serve to uphold cooperation and sociality. Cross-cultural examinations have uncovered remarkable consistency in people's conceptualizations of injustice and desired redress, suggesting certain universal psychological processes. When faced with unfairness, individuals experience visceral moral outrage and desires to punish transgressors, even at personal cost - patterns evident in children as well without socialization. This reflects an innate sensitivity and drive regarding justice and retribution. Evolutionary psychologists argue such dispositions were adaptive - outrage rallies communities to uphold cooperation norms by deterring selfishness, while punishment reestablishes fairness and trust. The centrality of justice and fairness for human psychology and culture thus points to its vital role in managing social relations.

Modern analyses reveal that justice reasoning cannot be reduced to abstract rules but manifests from dynamic social processes. For instance, fairness perceptions depend heavily on comparisons to relevant others and are not absolutes. People evaluate outcomes and exchanges as just or unjust relative to available alternatives, contextual norms and expectations based on shared identities with others. This accounts for variability in justice judgments across individuals and societies. The determination of appropriate compensation or punishment relies on complex calculations of harm, costs, social worth and situational constraints [7]. And experiences of (in)justice involve strong social emotions like anger or gratitude that emerge from appraisals of another's intentions, motives and the relationship [8]. Even young infants display such interactional patterns - they expect resources to be allocated impartially and react negatively only to deliberate unequal distribution [9].

Therefore, justice centrally relies on making sense of others' behaviors and qualities to determine praise or blame. This interpersonal sensitivity in fairness-related cognition signifies essential aspects of human sociality. Justice principles enable complex group cooperation between members with differing needs by curtailing excessive self-interest with rules for acceptable divisions and treatment [4]. The desire to pursue justice through rewarding good behavior or sanctioning wrongs further allows communities to regulate conduct. Justice systems also uphold social order by signaling recognition of people's basic dignity, rights and membership as equals in the moral community despite individual disputes. Rule of law adheres relations between strangers by guaranteeing protections and impartial application. Access to justice hence constitutes a vital human right with immense social import. Overall, the processes of perceiving, judging and administering justice reveal its role in affirming core aspects of human social relatedness and interconnectedness.

## **DISCUSSION**

Justice operates as an intricate, multidimensional construct in social life rather than binary evaluations of right versus wrong [3]. People appeal to diverse justice principles like need, equity, equality, capability, or claim strength to allocate resources, judge morality and assign punishments depending on philosophical orientations, contextual goals and group values.

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Different cultural models of agency, responsibility, rights and social order underlie this diversity. For example, Aristotle conceived justice as distributed proportionally based on merit and contribution whereas Marxists argue resources should follow need to enable equal participation [4]. Cross-cultural work finds individualist societies like America emphasize equity proportional to inputs whereas collectivist cultures stress equality of outcomes to maintain harmony [5]. These illustrate justice pluralism.

Moreover, the domains of justice can be broadly categorized into distributive forms dealing with allocation of socially valued goods versus procedural justice concerning adequate, fair decision-making processes. Interactions with institutions also invoke experienced justice termed interpersonal which depends on dignified, respectful treatment and informational explanations given. Restorative justice diverges entirely by focusing on dialogue, reparative actions and reintegrating offenders over punishment [9]. These forms operate concurrently, sometimes in cooperation or in tension depending on context. For example, offended parties may prioritize procedural fairness and consistent application of disciplinary rules over mitigatory restorative efforts by authorities. Or distributing increased resources for disadvantaged groups could violate some principles of equity but uphold social equality and needs-based priorities to redress injustice. Resolution relies on constructive discourse weighing competing claims and moral intuitions cooperatively. This plurality allows adaptability in serving justice but entails complexity.

Sociologists tie such variations in justice reasoning and applications to sociocultural variability [3]. Different forms of justice take precedence based on goals like order, coordination, cooperation, retribution, or conflict resolution appropriate for society's political economy, institutions and salient group identities. Constructs like honor, dignity, rights and responsibility also shape justice norms regarding entitlements, needs, vulnerability and accountability across communities. Within societies, marginalized groups may reject dominant standards that perpetuate unfairness by advancing alternative justice claims grounded in their lived experience and shared humanity - as seen in civil rights and social justice movements historically. Justice understandings and applications hence remain socially embedded, dynamic and pluralistic.

## CONCLUSION

This article examined multiple dimensions of justice and its expression of human sociality. The evidence suggests justice principles, values and practices constitute fundamental elements of cooperative social relations that likely have an evolutionary basis. Justice systems regulate conduct through deterrence and incentives in ways that foster stable cooperation and uphold shared interests. The perception and pursuit of justice relies heavily on social cognition and interactional processes signaling innate human moral sensitivity. Different forms of justice diverge based on cultural values, political goals and situational challenges but collectively serve to affirm human dignity, redistribute power and resolve disputes over cooperation rules. When institutional justice fails groups it severely undermines social bonds and functioning, necessitating reforms centered on inclusive restorative processes. Overall, justice seems vital for managing conflict and fulfilling innate human desires for fairness-based reciprocity that

enable enduring collective living. Treated as a mere legal formality justice loses meaning, but contextualized appropriately within social, moral and relational networks, justice breathes life into otherwise fractured communities.

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